

**STONES OF
ENGLAND:
WESTMINSTER ABBEY**

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Stones of England: Westminster Abbey by Wimsett Boulding

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WIMSETT BOULDING

**STONES OF
ENGLAND:
WESTMINSTER ABBEY**

STONES OF ENGLAND.

Westminster Abbey.

BY

WIMSETT BOULDING,

AUTHOR OF

"Agnus Dei," "Mary Queen of Scots," "Goldenwood Lodge,"
&c., &c.

LONDON :

BEMROSE & SONS, 10, PATERNOSTER BUILDINGS;
AND DERBY.

1878.

AMS 6730

TO
THE VERY REVEREND ARTHUR PENRHYN STANLEY, D.D.,
DEAN OF WESTMINSTER,
THIS POEM
IS DEDICATED,
BY HIS PERMISSION,
WITH GREAT ADMIRATION AND RESPECT.

Or Greece or Rome have I no heart to sing.
Thou wast my first love, and shalt be my last,
My country! All my days with thee have passed.
And should I strike my unaccustomed string
To other love, 'twould fail my touch, and bring
Shame on my Singer's Art. And since so vast
Thy greatness is, thy glory unsurpassed,
A wanton crime were such weak wandering.
Ungrateful seemeth it that English hands
Skilled in the lyre, should turn from thy dear face
To roam and sing on dead, deserted strands:
And while the Bards of old were fain to grace
Their Country's tale, the ashes of their lands
Should fire the Bards of the great English Race.

Say not those lands were worthier to be sung.
O Poet! do not thy grand sires this wrong
To whom alone Time granted to be strong.
From the great Singers all the splendour sprung
That hath immortalized their native tongue.
The fame of Troy lives but in Homer's Song,
Nor other title hath to live so long:
Round the old Bard gather the ages young
To listen to the warblings of his lyre:
Nor, save for these, would one tired wanderer stay.
Fair Helen's charms or proud Achilles' ire,
With all the glories of that famous fray,
Were tales too dull to cheer a Winter fire
Were they not strung on Poet's sparkling lay.

STONES OF ENGLAND:

WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

CANTO THE FIRST.

Old Abbey, with a thousand Winters grey !
Throned midst tempestuous ages, while swift Time
Builds in thy clefts, and broods, and makes his stay ;
And his grey flocks, upon thy head sublime
Gathered and settled, sing their wild, weird chime
Into the sunlight of this gentler age.
Sure-footed Ruin toils in vain to climb
Thy age-worn walls, that have defied the rage
Of storms ; and stormier strifes than the fierce elements
wage.

Thou Likeness of the Ages, caught and carved !
Wherein each century, could it wake, might see
The features of its perished life preserved ;
And feel at home with its young progeny
In the still shade of thine antiquity.
How many Englands in thy stones survive !
How many Londons have gazed—pored—on thee,
Standing amidst these ages fugitive,
These generations that like vapours past thee drive ! 1